

Historic Resources Commission Meeting Minutes of July 9, 2014

Members Present: Brendan Ross, Nan Chase, Woodard Farmer, David Carpenter, William Eakins, J. Ray Elingburg, Bryan Moffitt, David Nutter, Tracey Rizzo

Members Absent: Jo Stephenson, Richard Fast

Staff: Stacy Merten, Peggy Gardner, Jannice Ashley

Public: Kevin Hackett, Elzy Lindsey, Erik Field, Geoff Mohny, Mark Marshall, Roy Harris, Rob Motley, Gus Katsigianis

Call to Order: Chair Ross calls the meeting to order at 4:01 pm with a quorum present.

Adoption of Minutes: Commissioner Nutter moves to adopt the June 11, 2014 minutes as written.
Second by: Commissioner Chase
Vote for: ALL

Consent Agenda:
None

Public Hearings:
Ms. Merten asks for the order of agenda items to be changed, to allow one of the property owners more time to arrive.

Commission Action

MOTION TO MOVE AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by: Commissioner Chase
Second by: Commissioner Nutter
Vote for: ALL

Ms. Merten explains more time was requested for 11 Boston Way at the Executive Committee meeting, to arrange an onsite design team meeting. She asks for a motion to continue.

Commission Action

MOTION TO CONTINUE 11 Boston Way to August 2014 meeting.

Motion by: Commissioner Nutter
Second by: Commissioner Farmer
Vote for: ALL

Agenda Item

Owner/Applicant: Erik Field
Subject Property: 200 Montford Ave.
Hearing Date: July 9, 2014
Historic District: Montford
PIN: 9649.02-6985

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| Staff Comments | <p>Ms. Merten explains that she is comfortable that changing the fire escape stair meets the guidelines, but is concerned that the proposal to add a new rail system would create a false sense of historical development. She reviews the following staff report.</p> <p>Property Description: Martin House. Early 20th century highly irregular 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 story dwelling. Shingle over weatherboards, oversized dormers, Montford brackets, notable vernacular detail. (R. S. Smith, architect?) c. 1907</p> <p>Certificate of Appropriateness Request: Add 2" x 2" balusters with hand rail to fire escape and trim out fire escape with decking to match the first floor porch decking. New rail system will be 3' high x 4'9" deep and 16' 9" across. New ladder will be 13' telescoping model. All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.</p> <p>Staff Concerns per the Applicable Guidelines & Submittal Requirements:</p> <p>The guidelines for Accessibility and Life Safety Modifications found on pages 54-55, Porches Entrances and Balconies found on pages 72-73 and the Secretary of Interior Standards found on page 29 in the Design Review Guidelines for the Montford Historic District, adopted on April 14, 2010 and amended August 2013, were used to evaluate this request.</p> <p>Staff Recommendation: Staff does not recommend approval of the proposed application for the following reasons:</p> <p>Reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken. 2. Met accessibility and life safety modifications in such a way so that character defining features are preserved. 3. New porches, entrances and balconies may only be introduced on side or rear elevations. <p><i>(Commissioner Carpenter arrives 4:10 pm, Commissioner Eakins arrives 4:20 pm.)</i></p> |
| Applicant(s) | <p>Erik Field says he has been a Montford resident for 18 years. He passes out three photographs of the existing structure. He says he has met with Ms. Merten and Joe Chennault from Building Safety to find a solution. He</p> |

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| | notes the existing metal structure is not attractive and is rusting, but eliminating the fire escape is not an option since there is an apartment on the second floor. He says if the structure was built today, it would not meet the building codes, but it has been grandfathered in. He notes the current ladder stops 8' short of the ground, and is dangerous. He would like to minimize the structure and enhance the view of the front façade. He says the easiest solution would be to cut off the existing handrail and replace it with a wooden rail to reflect the ones on the front porch. |
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Public Comment

| Speaker Name | Issue(s) |
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| none | |

Commission Comments/Discussion

Commissioner Nutter asks about what year the house was built (c. 1898). Mr. Field is not sure when the metal fire escape structure was added.

Commissioner Elingburg says he doesn't understand the need to alter the existing structure. Mr. Field says it is more of a desire for an improved appearance than a need. He thinks a different railing would provide this.

Other options for fire escape placement are discussed. Mr. Field explains that the rear would not be a good place because there is not a straight drop to the ground from the dormers. He describes a box that holds a safety ladder which could be attached on the exterior below a window, and says without a straight drop these would not work correctly. Ms. Merten says at the site visit she asked about other options but was told this was the only window to the apartment. Commissioner Moffitt questions the need for a fire escape to the apartment. Commissioner Carpenter says the applicant should consider removing the entire structure.

Several Commissioners suggest another solution should be explored before a vote is taken. It is suggested the applicant meet again with Building Safety to discuss eliminating the structure altogether.

Commission Action

MOTION TO CONTINUE

Motion by: Commissioner Chase

Second by: Commissioner Moffitt

Vote for: ALL

Agenda Item

Owner/Applicant: Elzy Lindsey & Lauren Carlisle/Mark Marshall
Subject Property: 226 Flint Street
Hearing Date: July 9, 2014
Historic District: Montford
PIN: 9649.13-5591
Zoning District: RM-8
Other Permits: Building & Zoning

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| <p>Staff Comments</p> | <p>Ms. Merten reports the applicant was asked to submit revised plans at the June meeting, and has done so. Ms. Merten has questions about the slope, and access to the side door. She notes the approved plan allows 5'6" for the amount of exposed foundation, but there was discussion of only 4' at the June meeting. She has concerns with the side stairs not being consistent with the neighborhood. She shows four photographs of terraced stairs and recommends this as a better solution.</p> <p>Property Description: Vacant parcel, former site of 2 story dwelling.</p> <p>Certificate of Appropriateness Request: Construct new 2,400, two-story, single family residence with front porch, per approved attached plans, amended (insert date). Structure will have smooth stucco foundation, smooth sided Hardie-board horizontal siding with 8" reveal on lower level and wooden shingles on second story. Roof will be hip-style with a primary pitch of 10/12 and covered with "Pewter Gray" asphalt shingles. Windows will be wood, SDL, double-hung, 2 over 1 in singles and pairs; and some 4 light wooden casements. Details include brackets, frieze-board, 5 1/4" corner-boards and 3 1/2" window and door surrounds. Porch will have T&G wooden decking, 2" x 2" turned posts, 4" on center, with wood columns on stucco base. Front doors will be wood, 3/4 light. Chimney will be stucco. A single off-street parking space will be located on southeast corner of lot. Remove 24" Black Walnut and install landscaping per approved amended landscape plan (insert date). All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.</p> <p>Staff Concerns per the Applicable Guidelines & Submittal Requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Applicant should confirm slope of grade, as the drawings are inconsistent. 2. Is there room to access the lower level door below the steps? 3. The front/east facing foundation is mostly exposed in excess of 5' ft. 6" to a maximum of approximately 13 ft. (confirm dimension with applicant). 4. The side exit stair is very atypical for the district. <p>The guidelines for New Construction: Primary Structures found on pages 92-93 and the guidelines for Landscaping and Trees found on pages 40-41 in the Design Review Guidelines for the Montford Historic District, adopted on April 14, 2010 and amended August 2013, were used to evaluate this request.</p> <p>Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends that the applicant add fill material in front of the structure so that the stairway can remain in its original location and terrace the earth down to the street. This may require a retaining wall or elimination of the parking space.</p> |
| <p>Applicant(s)</p> | <p>Mark Marshall, Trio Construction, says he thought the stair configuration was decided at the June meeting. He says plantings will reach the bottom of the beadboard, obscuring the foundation. His client agrees that the side steps are the best design.</p> <p>Mr. Marshall presents a photo of a neighboring house, with steps leading up from the street. He shows the storyboard and discusses how the</p> |

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| | <p>rooflines of this house and 226 Flint align, and says the proposed stairs would be in keeping with the neighborhood.</p> <p>Commissioner Moffitt asks if a post under the stair platform will remain. He notes the access under the landing could be improved if this is removed. Ms. Merten agrees, and says the retaining wall could be removed as well. Mr. Marshall says the post is not being used and could be removed. Mr. Marshall also states that a 2 to 1 slope in front of the house leading down to the driveway would be less harsh than a retaining wall.</p> |
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Public Comment

| Speaker Name | Issue(s) |
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| Elzy Lindsay | Mr. Lindsay, property owner, asks the Commission to come to a decision. He says they have been through and through things, and his family needs closure. They were supposed to be in their house June 1, and are struggling without enough space at their rental house. He asks the Commission to consider the human element as they make their decisions. |

Commission Comments/Discussion

Commissioner Carpenter says he thinks the plan has improved, and there are other examples of side stairs in Montford. He encourages the other Commissioners to allow closure for the property owner. He questions the openness of the staircase, and whether it should be covered with lattice or other material.

Commissioner Moffitt says eliminating the post and reducing the size of the retaining wall will help the appearance. He notes posts are usually more substantial in Montford, and suggests the posts holding up the landing be increased in size. Ms. Merten says this could be a condition, reviewed by staff.

Commissioner Farmer asks about the foundation material. Ms. Merten says painted stucco was originally proposed, and there has been no change. Commissioner Farmer asks what color it will be, Mr. Marshall says that is irrelevant, but it will be an earth tone. Commissioner Farmer replies the color is important, and could help minimize the effect of the amount of exposed foundation.

Commissioner Farmer asks what size the foundation shrubs will be. Mr. Marshall says he will install mature, field dug evergreen plants, 5' to 6' tall, to help immediately mitigate the view of the foundation.

Attorney Ashley says the Commissioners need to provide examples of other side stairs in Montford to illustrate why they think they would be acceptable, as opposed to the staff recommendation. Commissioner Carpenter notes there are examples on Cumberland Avenue, which lead up to the side of the house. Commissioner Farmer suggests they approve the stairs as an isolated situation, noting the height of the front porch and the topography of the site.

The size of the posts are discussed, Commissioner Moffitt suggest 8". Commissioner Elingburg says they should be careful not to overreach, and be more general. Commissioner Carpenter suggests the columns' size match that of the porch columns on the back porch. There is agreement this would be the most appropriate.

Commission Action

MOTION TO ADOPT FINDINGS OF FACT

Madam Chair, based upon the evidence presented to this Commission, including Exhibit A – cover sheet with conceptual rendering of front façade; Exhibit B – typical interior pier, 6x6 post foundation, roof, basement and foundation plans; Exhibit C – typical window, wall, deck, stairs, picket and rail, rear porch and wall sections; Exhibit D – first and second floor plans; Exhibit E – front, right, left and rear elevations; Exhibit F – first and second floor electrical plans; Exhibit G – specifications; (*Exhibits H through J submitted 7/7/14*): Exhibit H – revised plans showing scaled front and side elevations; Exhibit I – conceptual rendering of front elevation showing foundation plantings; Exhibit J – revised landscape plan; (*Exhibits K through M submitted 7/9/14*): Exhibit K – four photographs of terraced stairs in the district; Exhibit L – photograph of neighborhood house with terraced front; Exhibit M – revised storyboard; and the Commission’s actual inspection and review of subject property by all members;

I move that this Commission adopt the following FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. That notice of public hearing on this application was published in the Asheville Citizen-Times on the 28th day of May, 2014 and the 25th of June, 2014, and that each owner of real property situated within two hundred feet of the subject property was notified of this hearing in the mail on the 28th day of May, 2014 as indicated by Exhibits N and O.
2. That at this hearing the applicant and affected property owners were all given the opportunity to offer oral and documentary evidence as well as submit questions to each other, the Historic Resources Commission staff and Commission members.
3. That the application is to Construct new 2,400 SF, two-story, single family residence with front porch, per approved attached plans, dated **7/7/14** with side entrance stairs. Structure will have smooth stucco foundation, smooth sided Hardie-board horizontal siding with 8” reveal on lower level and wooden shingles on second story. Roof will be hip-style with a primary pitch of 10/12 and covered with “Pewter Gray” asphalt shingles. Windows will be wood, SDL, double-hung, 2 over 1 in singles and pairs; and some 4 light wooden casements. Details include brackets, frieze-board, 5 ¼” corner-boards and 3 1/2” window and door surrounds. Porch will have T&G wooden decking, 2” x 2” turned posts, 4” on center, with wood columns on stucco base. Front doors will be wood, ¾ light. Chimney will be stucco. A single off-street parking space will be located on southeast corner of lot. Remove 24” Black Walnut and install landscaping per approved amended landscape plan dated **7/7/14**. **All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.**
4. That the guidelines for New Construction: Primary Structures found on pages 92-93 and the guidelines for Landscaping and Trees found on pages 40-41 in the Design Review Guidelines for the Montford Historic District, adopted on April 14, 2010 and amended August 2013, were used to evaluate this request.
5. This application **does** meet the design guidelines for the following reasons:
 - a. The proposed stair configuration and grading plan is consistent with the elevated porch, a feature unique to this house.
6. That the action and improvements proposed in the application before us for a Certificate of Appropriateness **are** compatible with the historic aspects and character of the Montford Historic District.

Motion by: Commissioner Carpenter
Second by: Commissioner Chase
Vote for: ALL

Based upon the foregoing FINDINGS OF FACT and for the reasons set forth therein, I move that a Certificate of Appropriateness be **issued**,
With the following conditions:

1. **Revised plans showing pilaster removed, retaining wall receded, and the size of the porch posts matching those on the rear porch be submitted for staff review.**
2. **Foundation plantings species and size be submitted for staff review.**

Motion by: Commissioner Carpenter
Second by: Commissioner Nutter
Vote for: ALL

Preliminary Review:

1)

Owner/Applicant: Hal Schuelke
Subject Property 18 St. Dunstan's Circle
Hearing Date: July 9, 2014
Historic District: St. Dunstan's

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| Staff Comments | Ms. Merten explains due to the late submittal of application materials no staff report was prepared, but she would encourage the HRC to give the applicant feedback. |
| Applicant(s) | Kevin Hackett, Longshore Builders, says his client, Hal Schuelke is not present. He shows elevations and floor plans of their proposed single family residence, and offers to answer questions. He explains there is an alley behind the property, and explains the proposed access. |

Commission Comments/Discussion

Commissioners Carpenter asks about the board and batten siding, expressing concern with the shift in siding treatment. He says the main structure should have horizontal siding. Mr. Hackett says he can change it to be more uniform. Ms. Merten notes he should bring examples of similar siding treatments in the district to support his choices.

Commissioner Farmer asks about the size of the windows on one elevation, noting they are very small. Mr. Hackett says two of them flank a fireplace, and that is a traditional treatment. Several Commissioners say those two windows are not the main concern, but the whole elevation with

only small casement windows does not seem compatible with the district. They agree there should be variation, with some larger windows.

Chair Ross says she would have preferred to review the plans in advance of the meeting. Ms. Merten says she has explained to the applicants that this may prevent them from completing their final review at only one meeting.

Ms. Merten asks about the material for the chimney and foundation. Mr. Hackett says it will be stucco. Ms. Merten says they should show photos of other homes with stuccoed chimneys in the district.

Mr. Hackett says the garage will not be included on the application, but may be presented at another time.

Other Business:

47 Short Street. Rob Motley and Gus Katsiannis have an issue about the siting of their approved house which is about to be built, and ask about procedures to have their CA amended. They explain the problems, and are advised to submit a flexible development request at the August meeting.

Preservation Plan. Elizabeth Watson of Heritage Strategies thanks the advisory committee for their input and presents a draft of the Historic Preservation Master Plan for Asheville and Buncombe County (dated July 3, 2014). She shows a powerpoint presentation which gives highlights of Chapters 1 through 8. She emphasizes planning for intense population growth, marking historic districts, involving other commissions and organizations in the preservation process, and increasing awareness of the historic fabric in the community that isn't included in a local district.

There is discussion about demolitions, and ways to improve communications earlier in the review process. Ms. Watson points out that it is not common knowledge that demolition is allowed in local historic districts, it can be delayed but not prevented. She suggests finding a way National Register properties might be flagged so that other City departments give them special consideration, and HRC is asked to comment or otherwise be included in decisions regarding them.

Ms. Watson stresses the educational process is an effective way to increase appreciation of preservation. She suggests ways to increase awareness, including training real estate agents, emphasizing tax credits, home repair workshops, and reaching out to self-identified and existing NR neighborhoods. She says a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District process could be a way to work with these neighborhoods.

Ms. Watson notes there are concerns about downtown design review. She notes much of the downtown is not NR. She suggests design review and compliance should be mandatory for NR properties, with renovations and repairs reviewed at a staff level and new construction or significant changes requiring Commission review. She thinks the Downtown Commission could wear a historic resources commission 'hat' when reviewing NR properties.

Commissioner Nutter notes these issues are potentially divisive. Commissioner Carpenter says there has been discussion about protecting more specific buildings downtown. Ms. Watson notes state or national significance could protect them better. Ms. Watson says the size of the present

HRC Minutes

July 9, 2014

buildings downtown encourages the existing types of businesses, and the businesses protect the buildings. Larger buildings would discourage the present business types. She says ways to keep this reciprocal relationship going should be a focus.

Ms. Watson points out the agricultural preservation plans in place are strong, but heritage tourism links are weak. She recommends gathering stories from the neighborhoods, and developing K-12 programs that teach the benefits of preservation early on. She notes more resources and staffing are needed to implement these goals.

Ms. Merten encourages the Commissioners to turn in their comments about the plan within a week.

Chair Ross introduces Roy Harris, a member of the Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Nutter moves to adjourn the meeting.

Second by: Commissioner Farmer

Vote for: ALL

The meeting is adjourned at 6:56 pm.